

IV. Implementation Plan

Comprehensive Strategy

Efforts to achieve park, recreation, and open space goals in Seattle's North Downtown area must account for several conditions. First, the City currently has limited acquisition and development resources, and land in this rapidly developing area is very expensive. Therefore, large-scale acquisition of land for open space will require creative, proactive, and coordinated public and private efforts. At the same time, the City and developers need to act proactively if an opportunity for a desired site arises. If an opportunity is missed, it is unlikely that there will be a second chance.

Secondly, there are currently a number of ways the City works with private developers to construct open spaces for public benefit. These programs provide an opportunity to achieve accessible open space through private efforts. This opportunity is enhanced by the fact that much of the land in North Downtown is owned by large land holders, providing the developer the ability to combine open space credits, incentives, and requirements into a substantial open space rather than into a number of small plazas scattered throughout the area.

City and County programs that have the potential to generate open space include:

- Open space requirements for residential and office development.
- The County Transfer of Development Credits Program.
- The City Transfer of Development Rights Program.
- Land "trades" for street and alley vacations.
- "Fee-in-lieu of" option for open space requirements.
- The Development Bonus Program.

Thirdly, while there is not substantial funding at the present time, Parks & Recreation is investing significant funds into the transformation of South Lake Union Park and renovation of Cascade Playground with ProParks Levy Funds and private contributions. ProParks Opportunity Fund monies are being held in reserve for land acquisition in Denny Triangle. The City is making a substantial commitment to the area in terms of transportation and utility investment. As noted in Section II, the substantial street and transit improvements will significantly change the area's circulation patterns. In addition, City Light is looking for two substation sites in the area, and King County Metro is planning substantial development on the existing Convention Center Station site. This activity provides the opportunity to enhance access to existing and proposed parks and the possibility of including parks and open space facilities as part of the public infrastructure projects.

Finally, the City, property owners, and community's vision for the area is unique in that it includes an intense, wide-ranging mix of uses and a dynamic, diverse population with a variety of occupations, interests, and life-styles. This means that traditional formulas for open space and recreation facilities may not apply in emerging North Downtown neighborhoods.

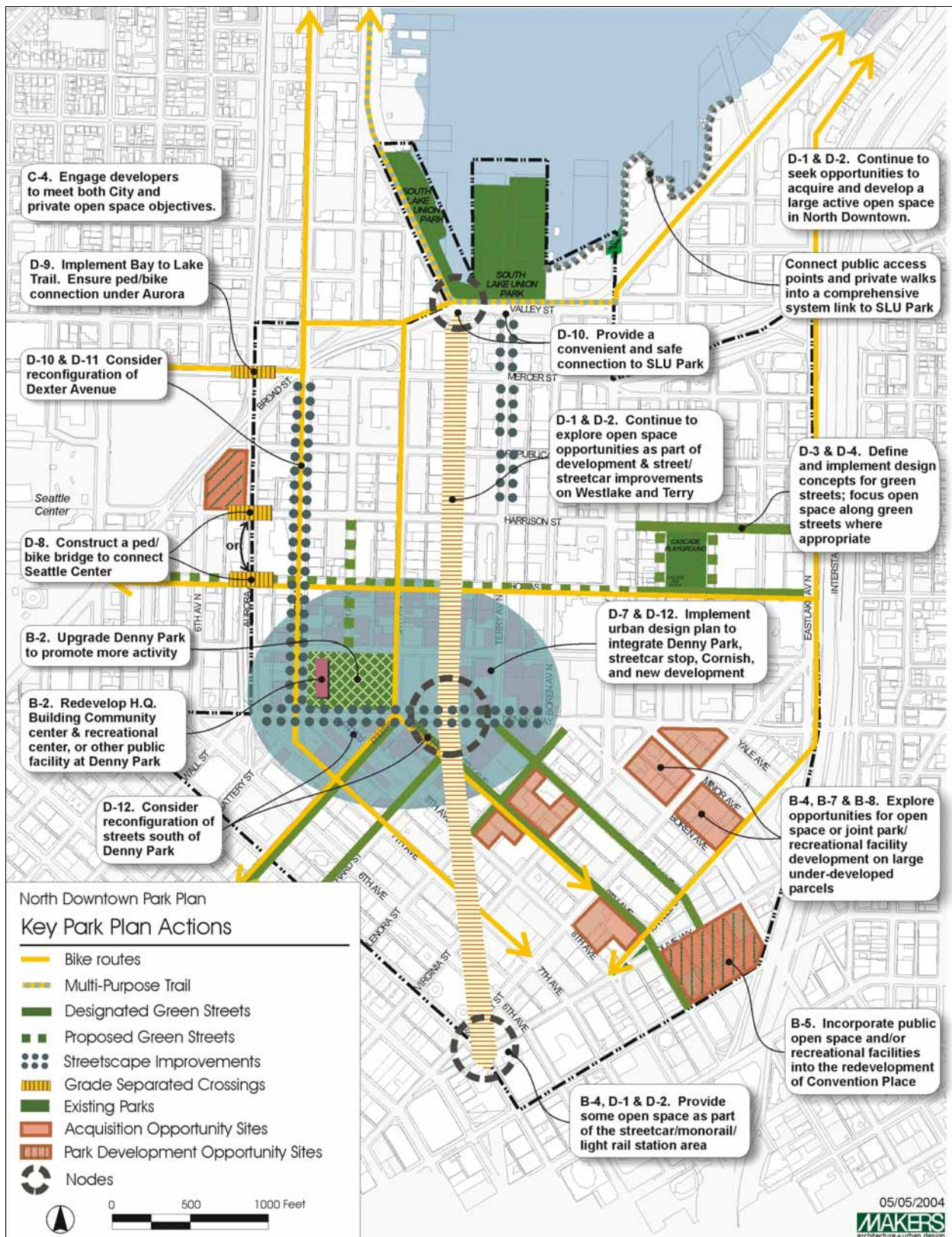


Figure 32. Recommended Actions.

Taken together, these conditions suggest a strategy that is **opportunistic, multi-dimensional, and integrated**. Parks & Recreation will need to conserve its resources to take advantage of opportunities that arise. Staff should continue current efforts to work proactively with land owners to explore park acquisition and joint projects. At the same time, Parks & Recreation should look for opportunities to maximize the benefits of existing facilities through joint-use and redevelopment.

Because there is not sufficient money to acquire and develop the desired facilities, Parks & Recreation must consider a variety of implementation techniques, including regulatory and incentive measures, leveraging of transportation improvements, and joint projects with other departments. New projects should be multi-dimensional, not only in the way they are achieved, but also by combining a variety of uses and accommodating a number of user groups in a single facility.

The conditions noted above also make it essential that Parks & Recreation work with other City and County departments to combine efforts and realize multiple benefits.

The comprehensive implementation strategy that emerges from these factors emphasizes the following categories of activities:

- Address strategic priorities and guidelines for acquisition and development.
- Improve current assets and acquire new open space and recreational facilities to meet targeted needs.
- Achieve specific recreational open space and facilities as part of private development through regulatory, incentive, and public/private partnership programs.
- Work with Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), and Department of Planning and Development (DPD) to achieve parks and open space goals through other transportation, planning, and capital improvement efforts.

Specific recommendations in these categories are described below and illustrated in Figure 32 opposite. A summary table listing all of the recommended actions is in the Executive Summary.

A. Guidelines for Parks and Open Space

Parts A and B of this section translate the needs analysis in Section III into location criteria and development guidelines for parks, open space, and recreational facilities in North Downtown. It is intended that City staff will consult the following guidelines and the location criteria in Part B of this section when evaluating property for acquisition and reviewing proposed park designs. Staff will also use them when reviewing permits for proposed private open space and recreational facility proposals that are required by city code or as part of a development incentive or land trade agreement.

A-1 Address the following guidelines when developing parks and recreation facilities.

1. When programming the uses for an applicable park and recreational facility, refer to Table 4 and endeavor to include at least two of the high-priority uses in the improvement. A mix of uses at each facility is encouraged to increase use and human activity, to expand the hours of usage, and to optimize the benefit from an individual asset.
2. All applicable open spaces should be sited to receive direct, year round sunlight at noon, if possible. This is especially true of areas with predominantly passive activities such as seating and picnicking. Direct sunlight is less important, although desirable, in active areas such as sports courts and off-leash areas.
3. If the site fronts on a designated Green Street or Principal Pedestrian Street in a Pedestrian-Designated Zone and Table 4 (in Part B of this section) indicates that the applicable park or recreational facility is desirable on such a street, then the applicable facility should be oriented to that street unless the City finds that there is a compelling reason to the contrary.
4. All applicable facilities must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
5. All applicable facilities should be directly physically and visually accessible from the adjacent street. Depending on the type of uses and design character, the open space may either be directly integrated with the sidewalk or separated by an appropriate enclosure with one or more prominent entries.
6. All applicable facilities should be integrated with adjacent transit stops by, at a minimum, providing physical and visual access from the transit stop area.
7. All applicable facilities should adhere to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) criteria.

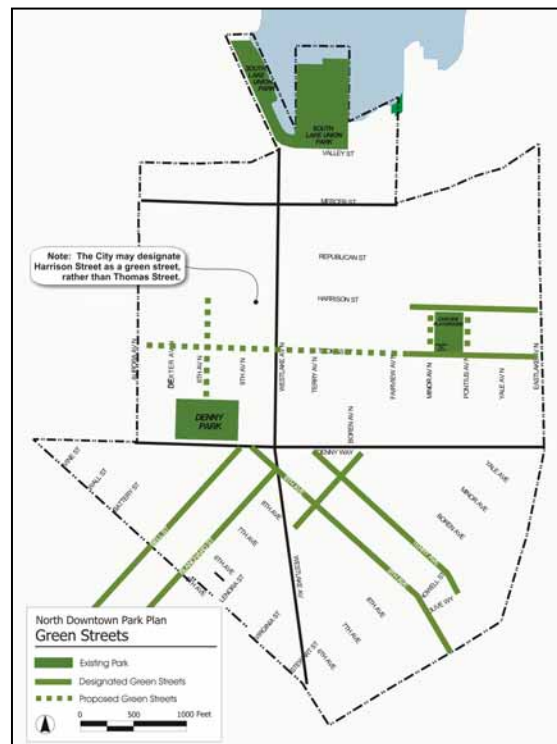


Figure 33. Existing and Proposed Green Streets.

8. Where possible, open space adjacent to, or near, other open spaces should feature complementary uses and appropriate circulation. Combining open space on adjacent parcels is generally desirable. Safe, well-lit pedestrian connections – especially through-block connections – are encouraged and should be a feature of open space planning on full-block developments.
9. When administering regulatory and incentive programs, engage developers to meet both public and private open space objectives by encouraging coordinated open space development and coordinated public/private improvements.
10. Consider adjacent land uses in park location and design. Ensure that park design and activities are compatible as much as possible with adjacent uses. Where possible, integrate parks with adjacent properties in terms of circulation patterns, spatial layout, and design character.
11. Address the following guidance regarding Green Streets.
 - (a) Green Streets are intended to:
 - Serve as landscaped open spaces connecting the surrounding neighborhoods
 - Foster and focus pedestrian and neighborhood activity
 - Create a sense of neighborhood identity
 - Integrate buildings and open spaces into a more unified whole
 - (b) As opposed to larger streets such as Westlake Avenue, Stewart Street, and Denny Way, which are intended to be attractive and continuous thoroughfares, Green Streets are more neighborhood oriented, intimate, and activity focused. Given this direction, parks on, or connected to, Green Streets should conform to the following guidelines:
 - Open spaces and public facilities should enhance neighborhood circulation by connecting directly to Green streets and, if possible, provide a mid block connection.
 - Open spaces should enhance approaches and entries into buildings.
 - Open spaces should include pedestrian elements and features to attract a wide variety of users.
 - Open spaces should be visible from the street. In most cases, integration of the open space with the sidewalk will be desired. However in some cases, such as an off leash area, children's' playground or enclosed oasis type space, some separation between the park and the street may be preferred.
 - A variety of open spaces is desired; therefore, new open spaces should not duplicate existing spaces but provide different settings and activities.
 - The selection of landscape elements such as plant materials, paving, lighting, and site furniture should consider those elements of the Green Street streetscape. In some cases, it may be best to integrate or extend the streetscape elements; in other cases complimentary or contrasting elements may be preferred.
 - Weather protection and other measures should be considered to extend park use.
 - Park designs that create gateways to a neighborhood are encouraged.
 - Parks and open spaces should include neighborhood defining elements such as art and signs.
 - Parks and open spaces should be ringed with active uses such as shops and restaurants, unless the park activities are incompatible with such uses. (E.g., a sports court might prevent access to a shop or detract from a restaurant atmosphere.) Where there is a conflict the public recreational use should have priority.
 - Parks and open spaces should include plenty of seating for resting and viewing park and street activity. Seating walls are encouraged to define spaces as well as provide informal seating.

B. Acquisition and Development

Cascade Playground and South Lake Union Park are significant resources that Seattle Parks & Recreation are in the process of upgrading. The principal Parks & Recreation asset without a specific improvement plan is Denny Park. Because Denny Park has such a high potential to fulfill a variety of open space functions and because site improvements would be a cost-effective way to increase public benefit, improving Denny Park is one of the highest priority actions in this plan.

While the improvement of Denny Park will add substantially to Parks & Recreation resources, new acquisitions will be necessary to meet the needs of new residents and workers.

Because land acquisition will be expensive, and because opportunities to purchase land often arise unexpectedly, it is necessary to have funds ready for purchase when the opportunity arises. The priorities and criteria for site acquisition listed below will help staff more efficiently evaluate prospective sites.

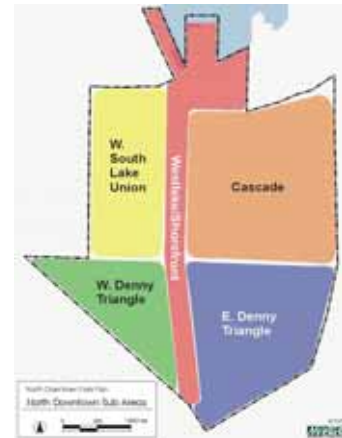


Figure 34. Subareas of North Downtown as Noted in Table 4.

B-1 Address the following priorities when acquiring and developing parks and recreation facilities and administering open space regulatory and incentive programs.

Table 4 identifies the relative acquisition/development priority for each type of park in each sector of North Downtown. Figure 39 identifies the location of each sector.

Table 4. Park Facilities Priorities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● = High priority ○ = Priority = Not a priority or not feasible 	W. Denny Triangle	E. Denny Triangle	Cascade	W. South Lake Union	Westlake/Shorefront	Siting on Green Street	Siting on Pedestrian Street ¹
Large active open space ²		○		○		A	A
Sports courts ³	●	●	○	●		D	A
Off-leash area		●	●	●		D	A
Children's play area	● (2 sites)	●		●		D	A
Neighborhood park	●	●		●		D	A
Urban plaza	●	●	○	○	●	A	D
Community center with gym	●	●	●	●		D	A
Community gardens	●	○		●		A	U

Legend for Green Street and Pedestrian Street symbols: U = Undesirable D = Desirable A = Acceptable

Note:

- Pedestrian Streets are the primary streets within Pedestrian Designated Zones. Westlake Avenue is a possible candidate.
- Although a large active open space is a high priority goal for North Downtown, very limited opportunities for such a space exist at present. However, if such an opportunity arises, it would have top priority for immediate acquisition.
- Could include skateboard parks.

This chart's priorities are based on relative need assuming growth projections and facilities existing or funded in 2004. The development of new facilities and changes in growth may change the priorities. Maps on the following pages identify key acquisition and development strategies for each of the subareas within North Downtown.

B-2 Improve Denny Park.

Denny Park consists of 4.6 acres of sloped, grassy area with canopy trees and formal pathways. The Department of Parks & Recreation's headquarters building is located on the site. Currently there is little activity within the park except for people relaxing on benches and some day-care play sessions. Few pedestrian uses are located around the site, and heavy traffic along Denny Way on the south discourages access.

With so little public use, the park represents an underutilized resource that is centrally located to the district's projected growth. Therefore, this plan recommends redeveloping the park to encourage appropriate use, improving pedestrian access to the site, and considering remodeling and/or replacement of the headquarters building with a community center. However, the park's space is limited and will not be able to satisfy all needs.

Potential on-site improvements might include:

- Open plaza with seating for relaxing, informal gatherings, and performances.
- Sports courts, if space allows.
- Children's play area.
- Landscaping with trees and grass.
- Floral gardens and public art.
- An off-leash dog area, if space allows.

The suggested community center might include, at a minimum:

- Classrooms/multi-purpose rooms (and exercise rooms).
- Restrooms.
- Day-care center.
- Other facilities as identified.

A gymnasium would add considerable building footprint and may or may not be appropriate.

Steps to pursue this recommendation include:

1. Conduct a detailed site programming and master planning study for Denny Park.
2. Consider Denny Park improvements for a future bond measure.
3. Consider Denny Park improvements for funds secured from other sources, including private development agreements.
4. Implement the proposed urban design strategy integrating streets, pedestrians, open space, and development in the Denny/Westlake Node. As described in recommendation D-12 below.

B-3 Establish an account or fund into which money from various sources can be added.

A special account dedicated to acquiring park land or facilities in North Downtown would be invaluable in taking advantage of acquisition opportunities that arise. Monies from TDRs, TDCs, “fees-in-lieu of” agreements, etc., should be put into this account.

B-4 Continue to seek opportunities to acquire and develop park and recreational facilities in North Downtown, especially within Denny Triangle.

There is a projected deficit of 8 acres of open space within North Downtown by 2025. The projected open space deficit by 2025 is even larger (10.2 acres) within Denny Triangle. While it is not expected that this deficit be made up by public acquisition, high priority should be placed on acquisition and development of park space for high-demand uses that are not usually provided as part of private developments. (For example, outdoor plazas are commonly constructed to augment development, but off-leash dog areas or play courts are not.)

B-5 Incorporate public open space and/or recreational facilities into the redevelopment of Convention Place.

The redevelopment of this 3+ acre site currently owned by King County presents one of the best opportunities within Denny Triangle to provide public open space and/or public recreational facilities due to its current public ownership. While it is unreasonable to expect a large active open space on the site, there is an opportunity to create smaller active open spaces such as sports courts and/or indoor facilities such as a full-service community center with a gymnasium, integrated with private development.

B-6 Consider developing a large, active open space on SDOT’s maintenance site between Broad and Harrison Streets.

At roughly 2 acres, this site could replicate the active recreational uses performed at the temporary Denny Playfield. A replacement maintenance site would be needed. Uses could include a multi-purpose sports field and sports courts. The proposed Harrison or Thomas Street overpass at Aurora Avenue N would provide a crucial connection to the site from the planning area.

B-7 Consider park and recreational opportunities associated with proposed substation improvements in the planning area.

Seattle City Light is planning to develop two substation sites to accommodate projected growth in the planning area. One site will need to be in each of the Denny Triangle and South Lake Union Urban Villages. The South Lake Union station will most likely be above grade, but the Denny Triangle station could be underground.

City Light is actively pursuing a site in the South Lake Union area north of Denny Way. Once City Light has selected a site, the two departments should evaluate the feasibility of co-locating recreational facilities with the substation.

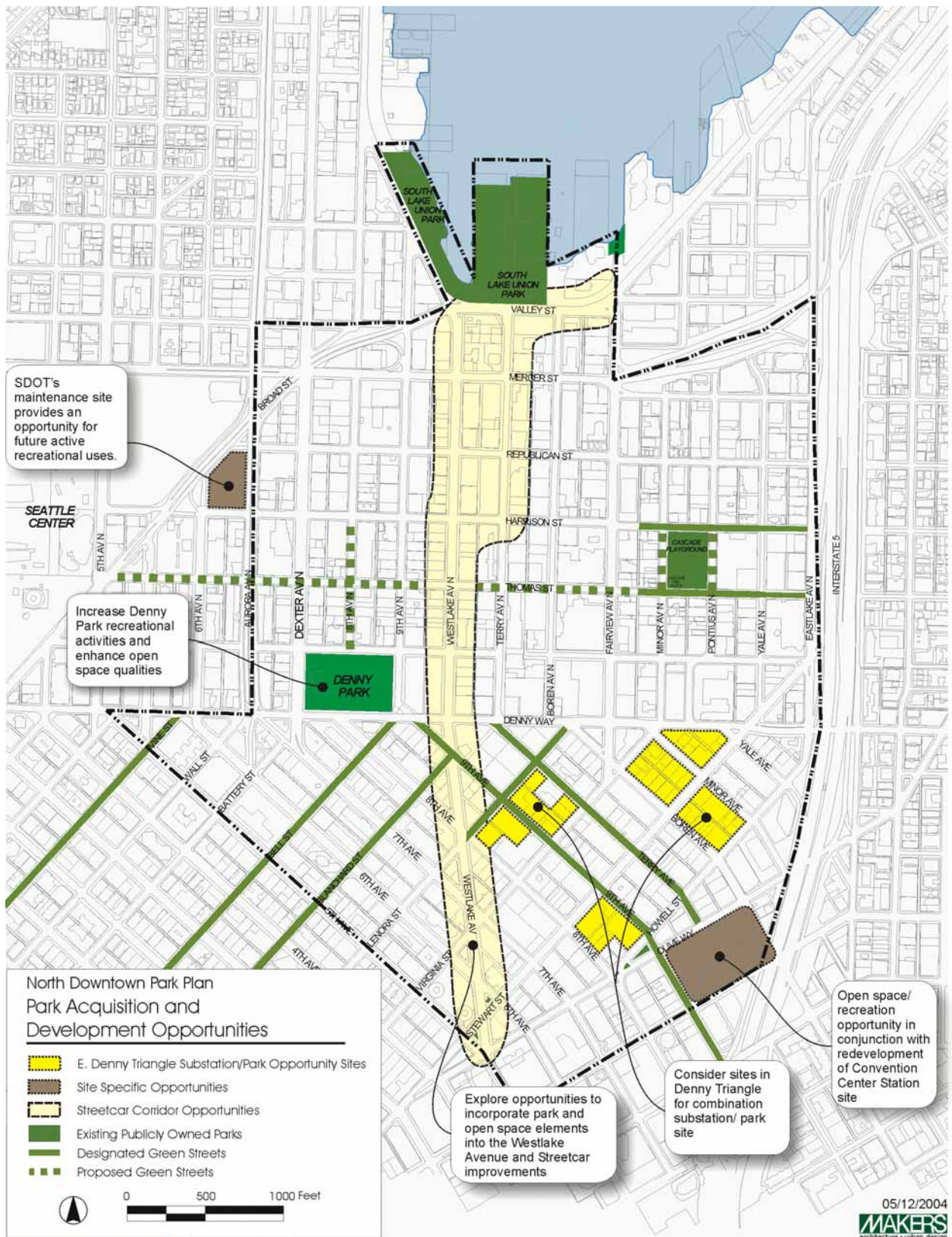


Figure 35. Park Acquisition and Development Opportunities.

City Light has not identified any specific site in the Denny Triangle area, so Parks & Recreation can take the lead in identifying a suitable site. If Parks & Recreation can find an approximately 200' x 250' site with underground conduit access on three sides, then the two departments could jointly pursue acquisition. Since the bulk of the up-front acquisition would be paid by City Light, it is critical that City Light dedicate funds now in case a site is located. Once City Light has installed the station, Parks & Recreation can acquire development funds and contribute its part of the project.

B-8 Consider purchasing or leasing a portion of a new development for community and recreation facilities.

Many new developments may accommodate recreation facilities within a building complex. For example, a gymnasium might be situated on a parking garage, taking advantage of its large floor plate. To prepare for such opportunities, Parks & Recreation should identify the legal and administrative issues associated with purchasing a portion of a building. The International District Community Center facility may be a model for this approach.

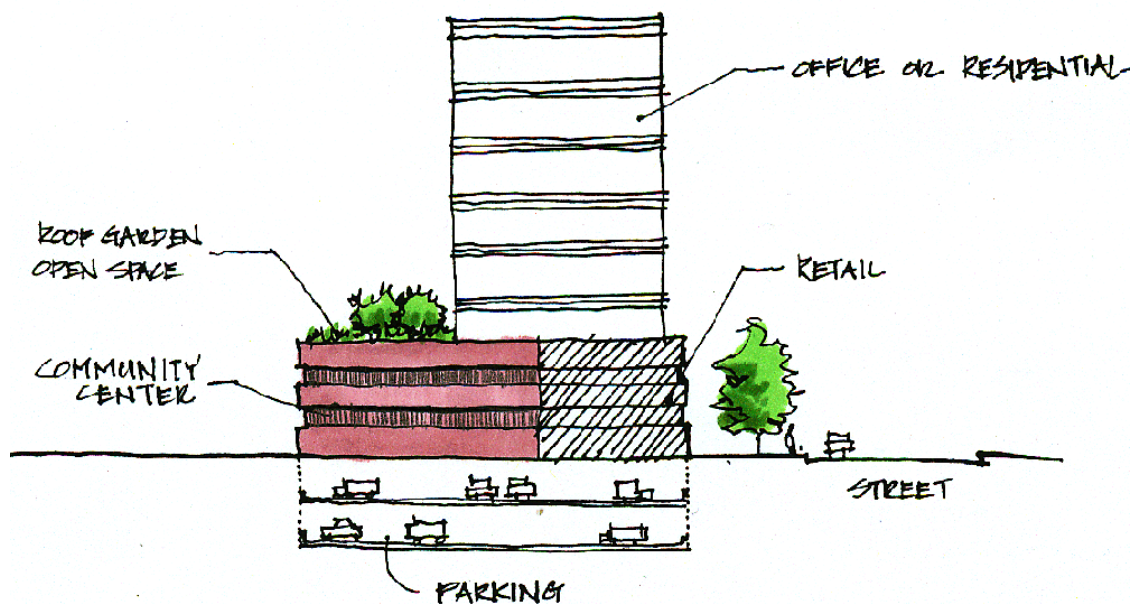


Figure 36. Schematic Concept of Joint Recreational/Private Development.

C. Regulatory and Incentive Program Actions

General Recommendations

The City has established a number of regulatory, development rights transfer, and incentive programs that provide the opportunity to achieve accessible open space. These programs are individually summarized below along with recommendations for increasing their effectiveness. More important than the recommendations for the individual programs, however, are the following general recommendations, which address the various programs in total.

C-1 Better coordination with various programs for greater effectiveness.

Currently, the programs comprise an uncoordinated mixture of measures with different purposes, applicability, guidelines, and administering departments. The City should review current programs to assess their effectiveness and identify a way that they can be better coordinated. Administrative rules for combining funds from various development projects and augmenting public resources should be developed. The City Center EIS, Center City Project, and subsequent code revisions provide an excellent opportunity to accomplish this.

C-2 Establish comprehensive guidelines for the location and design of parks, open space, and recreational facilities.

The guidelines should build on those in Part A of this section. More comprehensive guidelines would not only simplify working with developers on individual projects, they would help ensure that the individual open spaces work as a more integrated system in providing for public needs. The guidelines should also be considered in the design review by the local Design Review Boards.

C-3 Monitor the effectiveness of these programs in providing open space.

The City should periodically monitor the regulatory and incentive programs to assess their effectiveness and correct any problems that are identified. Responses from residents, employees, and property owners should be a part of the assessment. This might be an opportunity for interdepartmental coordination. Parks & Recreation would be a logical department to lead this evaluation, since it will be most knowledgeable about the area's open space and recreational needs.

C-4 Engage developers to meet both City and private open space objectives.

Adjust regulatory and incentive programs to encourage coordinated open space development and coordinated public/private improvements for mutual benefit. For example, consider offering large land holders incentives, such as adding public open space as part of the development or purchasing some open space with Parks & Recreation funds, if the developer provides more than the minimum required.

Recommendations for Specific Programs

C-5 Review zoning code requirements for open space.

Description. The City requires that open space be provided as part of office development south of Denny Way and as part of mixed use and residential development throughout the planning area. The City allows open space required by code to also satisfy open space used to bonus development if the open space is public and meets the requirements of the Director’s Rule for open space bonusing. (See City Development Bonus Program.)

Challenges and Opportunities. Open space required under this provision may be internal (such as an exercise room) or part of the building (such as a roof garden). Therefore, this program often does not result in available open space that benefits the community. Also, the program limits the types of open spaces that can be provided. In Denny Triangle, the required open space can be off-site if located within ¼ mile of the site. Within South Lake Union, the required open space must be on-site.

Recommendations. It may be possible to encourage developers to provide open space that is usable – or at least visible – to the general public through design review, especially if it is tied to design departures that facilitate development. The City should consider zoning code revisions that:

- Allow required open spaces to be any of the types listed in Table 4, Park Facilities Priorities.
- Allow required open spaces to be added to, or contiguous with, other public or private open spaces or Parks & Recreation facilities.
- Allow a reduction in gross open space area if a high-priority *public* open space is provided.
- Incorporate the guidelines in Part A of this section for development of open space.

C-6 Evaluate the fee in lieu of open space provision.

Description. Contributing a fee in lieu of meeting on-site open space requirements for new development is currently an option in all downtown zones south of Denny Way (DOC and DMC zones) and in the Seattle Cascade Mixed (SCM) zone in the Cascade Neighborhood. Properties in the western portion of South Lake Union are not eligible for the “fee-in-lieu of” program. Developers have not opted for this approach in the past. The City is currently exploring ways to make this program more attractive and effective.

Challenges and Opportunities. Developer participation in the “fee-in-lieu of” program has been non-existent, and it is not clear how the funds could be pooled, with other developer contributions, to meet the development’s open space requirements.

Recommendations. Identify what can be done to make this program more attractive to property owners and to extend the “fee-in-lieu of” opportunities to the area north of Denny Way. Ensure that the amount required in lieu of privately developed open space is sufficient to provide significant public benefit. Developer contributions under the “fee-in-lieu of” program are deposited into a separate account for open space acquisition within the area. (See Recommendation B-3.)

C-7 Review and revise Director’s Rule 20.93 for bonusing development.

Description. The City allows developers in the downtown south of Denny Way to increase the allowable floor area ratio (FAR: essentially, the overall size of a building) if they provide “public benefit features,” which include some types of open spaces. In other words, developers can build a larger building than otherwise allowed by code if they provide these public benefit features, which may include, for example, low-income housing or child care facilities. The administration of this program was updated by amendments to the Land Use Code in 2001 and is also guided by Director’s Rule 20.93. The rule provides guidance for how to design the public benefit features allowed by the code. This program has been widely used to achieve urban plazas and other open space amenities in the downtown.

Challenges and Opportunities. Though portions of the Director’s Rule are preempted by the 2001 code update, portions of the rule date back to 1985 and contain provisions that may be counterproductive to North Downtown park planning objectives. For example, the rule requires that bonusable open space be partially ringed with active pedestrian-oriented uses, which may be desirable or not, depending on open space objectives. Additionally, the current rule does not describe the type of open spaces most desirable in the various sections of downtown.

Recommendations. The City should consider revising or augmenting Director’s Rule 20-93 for this area to describe the highest priority open spaces and general criteria for their design. The revised rule might restrict the use of “public benefit features” that are not open space because open space is in demand in the Denny Triangle. The revised rule should incorporate the priorities and guidelines in Parts A and B of this section.

C-8 Designate money from street and alley vacations in the North Downtown to be used in the North Downtown, with highest priority placed on the East Denny Triangle.

Description. Fifty percent of street and alley vacation fees go to the Cumulative Reserve Fund, which has been successfully used by Parks & Recreation for open space acquisition (on and off-site). The remaining fifty percent goes towards the Street Vacation Fund for transportation improvements. Existing City policy stresses the importance of streets and alleys to the quality, efficiency, and public life of the

city and should be disrupted only in certain instances. The potential merits of a proposed vacation must demonstrate significant long term benefits to the public to justify the vacation. The public benefits must exceed those the proponents would have provided without a vacation request, must outweigh the loss of public right of way created by the vacation and must constitute a true public benefit.

Challenges and Opportunities. Due to the collision of street grids at Denny Way and at Westlake Avenue, the system of streets and alleys in Denny Triangle is less continuous than in the Downtown Core, Belltown, and even South Lake Union. Considering the projected shortage of open space in the neighborhood, planning participants identified alleys and the half block segments of 8th and 9th Streets adjacent to Denny Way as possible negotiation tools with developers to maximize open space and recreational resources in the neighborhood. The biggest challenge is finding alternative sites for service uses usually provided for within the alleys.

Recommendations. The City should use recommendations in Part A of this section as a guide for the use of Cumulative Reserve Funds produced by alley vacation proposals. Funds for street vacations in the Denny/Westlake Node (see Action D-12) should be used to facilitate open space acquisition and improvements in the immediate area.

C-9 Establish priorities for the City and County Transfer of Development Credits (TDC) fund expenditure conforming to guidelines in Part A of this section.

Description. Within the Denny Triangle area, residential or mixed use projects that gain additional height by participating in the TDC program contribute \$20,000 per development credit (i.e., 2,000 square feet of additional floor area above the allowable height limit). Under this program developers may build up to 30 percent above the normal code limit. One half of the contributed amount is directed toward “neighborhood amenities” and may be used for open space acquisition and development.

King County has also agreed to put an additional \$500,000 into the city fund for local improvements for the first 10 credits.

Challenges and Opportunities. This program appears to provide a significant source of funds for open space acquisition and development. The City expects the first several credits to be purchased soon and to receive approximately \$400,000 from the County.

Recommendations. The City should use this plan to set priorities for the expenditure of TDC funds. Additionally, the City should identify means to combine these funds with other funds to achieve larger amounts for substantial purchases.

C-10 Review the City’s Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program and revise it to make it a more effective open space incentive tool.

Description. Under this program (See SMC 23.49.014), developers may increase commercial floor area above base density by purchasing transfer of development rights from eligible open space TDR-sending sites. Eligible sending sites include designated historic landmarks, buildings with affordable housing, and open space. A typical use of this program might be for Parks & Recreation or a private property owner to sell the development rights of a piece of dedicated open space; thus partially offsetting the cost of the land.

Challenges and Opportunities. Currently, the program is applicable only south of Denny Way, and its effectiveness is dependent on there being a market for the TDR’s. This program was analyzed during the neighborhood planning efforts in 2000, and the City is currently reviewing the effectiveness as part of the Center City Project.

Recommendations. Options to consider in the Center City Project analysis might include:

- Allowing properties north of Denny Way to be sending sites.
- Allowing greater height and bulk in limited areas where impacts can be avoided and where a substantial public benefit can be achieved in terms of recreational open space. (For example, the block between 9th Avenue N, John, Westlake, and Denny might be the site of a taller, “keystone” building that contributes to local open space, pedestrian movement, and transit objectives.)
- Revising the formula for TDR pricing and priorities.

D. Measures to Coordinate Parks & Recreation Activities with Other City Initiatives

The City is currently engaged in a number of public infrastructure efforts that can enhance North Downtown parks and recreational facilities by increasing access to facilities, by providing trails and sidewalks that offer recreational benefits, and by visually connecting and enhancing open spaces. Circulation linkages providing access to parks are especially critical in North Downtown. Additionally, because of the intensity of land use and the generally smaller size of open spaces, the quality of the streetscape and the character of adjacent development can affect the success of local park facilities. The relationship between an open space and nearby streets is particularly important and addressed by the guidelines for park development in Part A of this section.

Because streets and other public facility projects are initiated by SDOT and SPU, and DPD is involved in the planning, coordination between these departments is critical. At this point, transportation and utility improvement plans are dependent on a number of factors and are changing as new information is available. Therefore, the recommendations below are subject to change. The first two recommendations involve potential park and open space development, while the remainder focus on improving park access and setting.

D-1 As Westlake is improved, continue to explore opportunities for siting open space development.

Seattle Departments of Planning and Development (DPD) and Transportation (SDOT) are currently working on a streetscape plan for Westlake Avenue that incorporates the streetcar line, urban design improvements, and redevelopment opportunities. Open space developed as part of that plan should comply with the priorities and guidelines in this plan. Parks & Recreation staff should coordinate with that effort to pursue any opportunities for park acquisition and development, provided the sites can accommodate the priority activities and objectives of this plan.

Diagonal streets and partial blocks south of Denny Way may provide special opportunities. Integrate open space design into the proposed street design character.

D-2 Integrate open spaces at key streetcar stops.

Streetcar stops will be natural points of pedestrian activity that may merit special open space enhancements. Key stops include the Metro/monorail/streetcar connections at Westlake, South Lake Union Park, and Denny Way. A northbound stop just north of Denny Way and a southbound stop at the triangle of land between Denny Way and 9th Avenue N appear to offer opportunities as well.

D-3 Define the design concepts for “Green Streets” improvements in North Downtown.

It is recommended that DPD in conjunction with SDOT review the current Green Streets program and develop a concept plan for each street so that as development occurs, the associated street improvements will conform to a comprehensive design. The plan will also inform the design of parks and open spaces along the street and will be useful in design review.

D-4 Implement “Green Streets” improvements for existing designated streets in conjunction with new development.

Streetscape improvements are a proven method to foster and integrate high-quality redevelopment. Also, because the Green Streets program’s primary intent is to nurture neighborhood development, it makes sense to construct Green Street improvements early in the process, as an incentive for attracting a diverse residential population. (Also see Action A-1.)

D-5 Consider cooperative street improvement funding for key street improvements

Given the importance of the streetscapes to supporting new development, it may be useful to consider a cooperative street improvement effort such as a local improvement district (LID) for key streets. This may be especially cost effective if new development requires increased utility capacity or infrastructure. However, property owner contributions to street improvements should not be considered a substitute for increased open space unless the improvements provide a critical pedestrian link to an important park.

D-6 Implement the “Big Mercer/Little Valley” two-way traffic plan.

Ensure convenient and safe pedestrian crossings for all population groups at Westlake and Terry Avenue N. Integrate landscape design and urban design qualities for streets into the North Downtown context.

D-7 Upgrade Denny Way with wide sidewalks and double street tree plantings.

Denny Way between Aurora and Fairview is an especially important thoroughfare, and it is critical that it not be perceived as a divider between the north and south portions of the area. (See Action D-12.)

D-8 Construct a pedestrian and bicycle bridge over Aurora.

This bridge will connect North Downtown to Seattle Center. Current plans call for the bridge to be at Thomas Street, but Harrison Street may be preferred, depending on circulation plans for the area.

D-9 Implement the Bay-to-Lake Trail.

The Bay-to-Lake Trail will provide an important connection to the waterfront and Seattle Center and should be a part of street reconfiguration. See also D-10 below.

D-10 Maintain and enhance pedestrian and bicycle access on Valley, Dexter, Eastlake, and vicinity.

Other key streets include Westlake, 9th, Valley, and all designated and proposed Green Streets. Special attention is needed at the Valley/Westlake and Valley/9th Avenue N intersections. Ensure pedestrian/bicycle connections from South Lake Union Park to Dexter Avenue N bicycle lanes and under Aurora Avenue N at Mercer Street. Connect and ensure retention of a public access trail along the Lake Union shoreline.

D-11 Explore options to rechannelize Dexter Avenue N and the intersections of Aurora Avenue N, 7th Avenue, Battery Street, Wall Street, and Denny Way.

Dexter Avenue N is an especially wide street, and rechannelization appears possible. SDOT is currently examining the confluence of streets in the Aurora/Dexter/Denny vicinity.

D-12 Implement the proposed urban design strategy integrating streets, pedestrians, open space, and development in the Denny/Westlake Node.

Because of its central location, high visibility, streetcar access, diverse activities, bowl-shaped topography, redevelopment potential, and proximity to Denny Park, the area within two to three blocks of the Denny Way/Westlake Avenue intersection merits a coordinated urban design approach. An urban design/redevelopment strategy should be formulated by the City in conjunction with participating stakeholders. The following activities are suggested as part of that strategy.

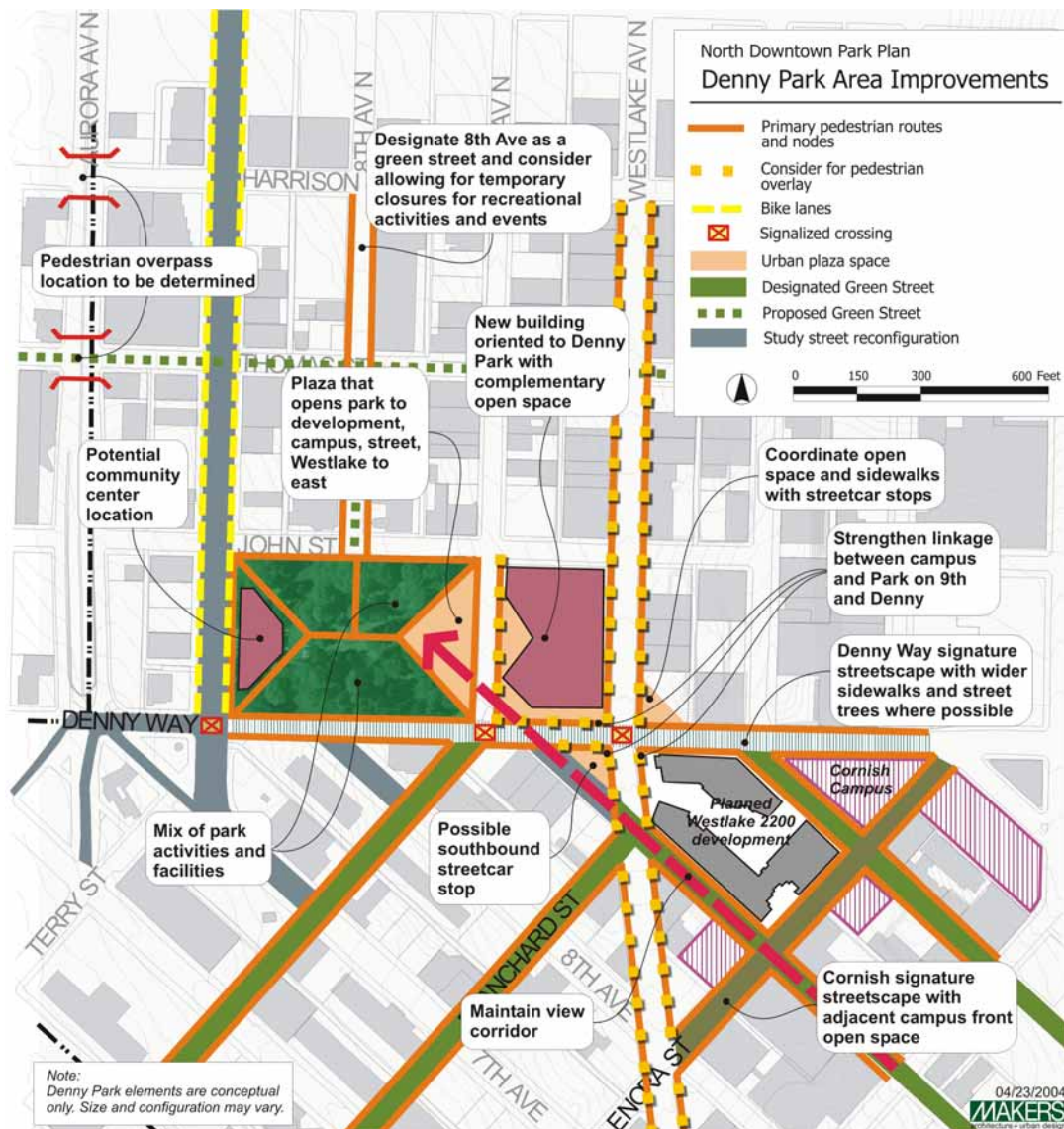


Figure 37. Improvement Concept for the Denny/Westlake Node.

Upgrade Denny Way with boulevard landscaping and wide sidewalks and double rows of street trees from Aurora to Fairview. Consider some short block street closures and street rechannelization. Improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian open spaces. Facilitate crossing of Denny Way at Westlake and 9th Avenue signalized intersections. Facilitate pedestrian circulation from the Cornish Institute campus to Denny Park. Upgrade Denny Park. (See Recommendation B-2.) Work with developers to integrate new development with streets, parks, and private open spaces. A more detailed description of this recommendation is in Section V.

D-13 Identify and improve loop walking routes with connections to nearby attractions.

Attractive, continuous, circuitous pedestrian routes via trails and pedestrian-oriented streets encourage walking. The community, perhaps as part of the “Way to Go”/“Feet First” program (administered by SDOT), should identify potential loops and improvements that would enhance a broader network of walking routes.

D-14 Identify streets for temporary closure during festivals and neighborhood functions.

Temporary closure of a street for a day or two can provide space for festivals, celebrations, art fairs, or other community activities. Appropriate streets to consider include:

- 8th Avenue N between N Harrison Street and John Street.
- Portions of Lenora Street and Terry Avenue in the vicinity of the Cornish campus.
- Streets adjacent to Cascade Playground.
- Portions of Terry Avenue N between Valley and Thomas Streets (selected blocks, depending on the type of event).

D-15 If a school is developed in the vicinity, explore options to jointly develop and manage open space and recreational facilities for the benefit of both school programs and the community.

Subarea Summaries

The maps and illustrations on the following pages describe the key actions recommended in each subarea. Although the information is presented earlier in the section, the individual maps more clearly identify specific recommendations.

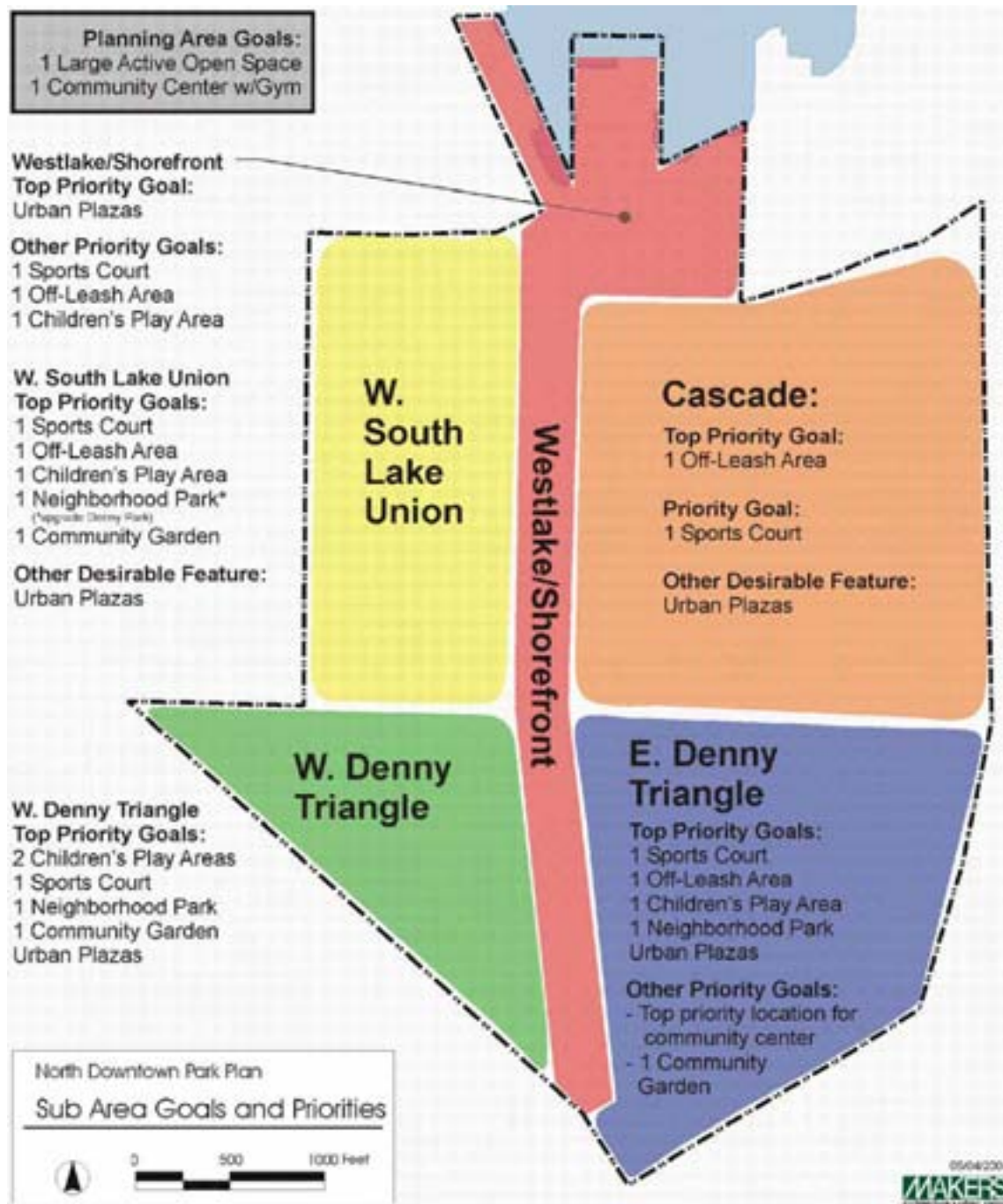


Figure 38. Goals and Priorities for Each of the Subareas.

East Denny Triangle

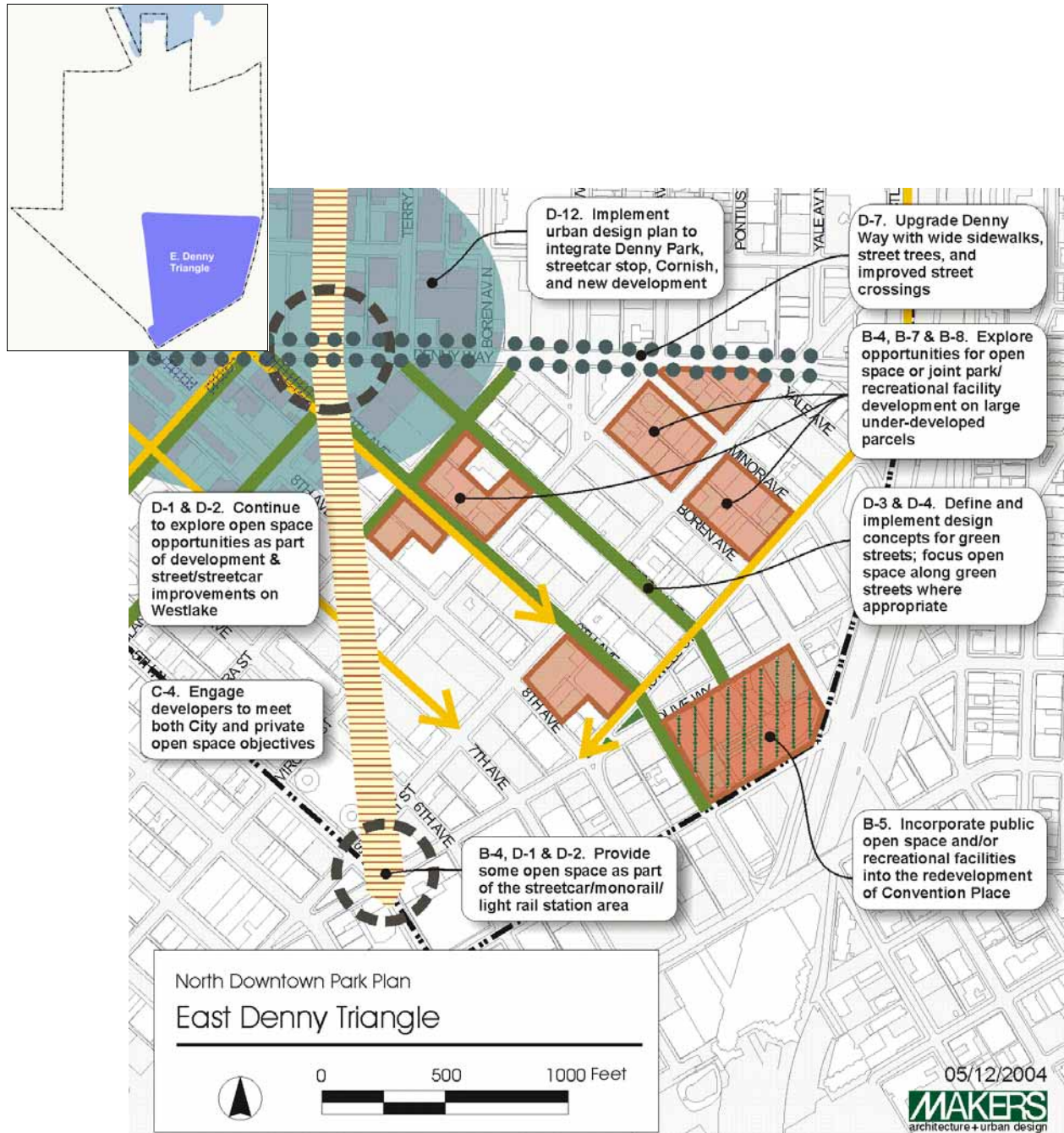


Figure 39. Key Acquisition and Development Strategies for East Denny Triangle.

West Denny Triangle



Figure 40. Key Acquisition and Development Strategies for West Denny Triangle.

Westlake Corridor/Shorefront Area

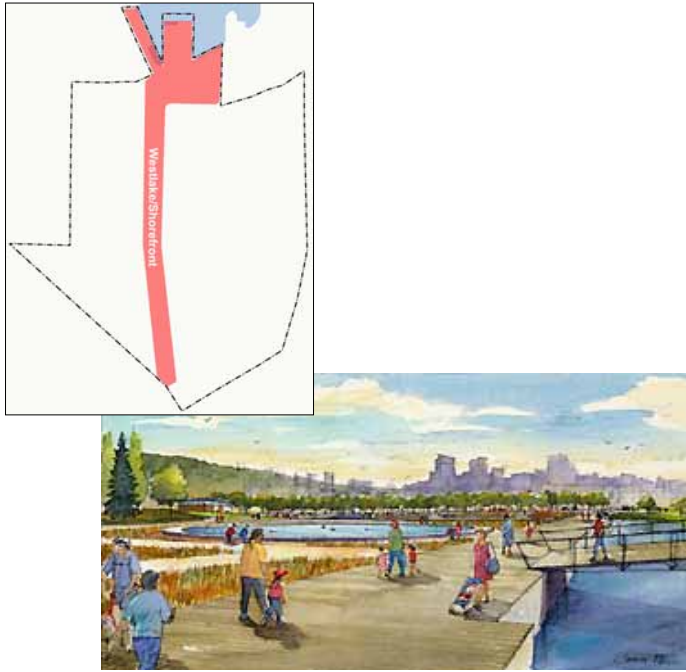


Figure 41. Proposed South Lake Union Park Improvements.

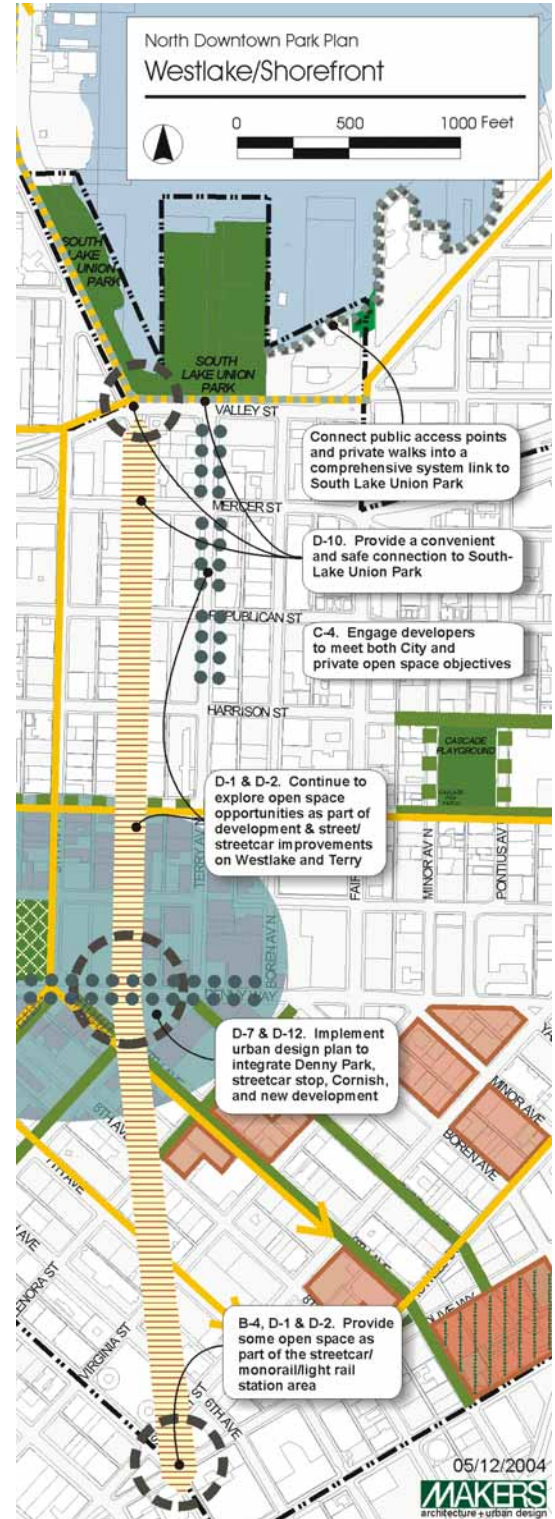


Figure 42. Key Acquisition and Development Strategies for Westlake Corridor/Shorefront Area.

Cascade

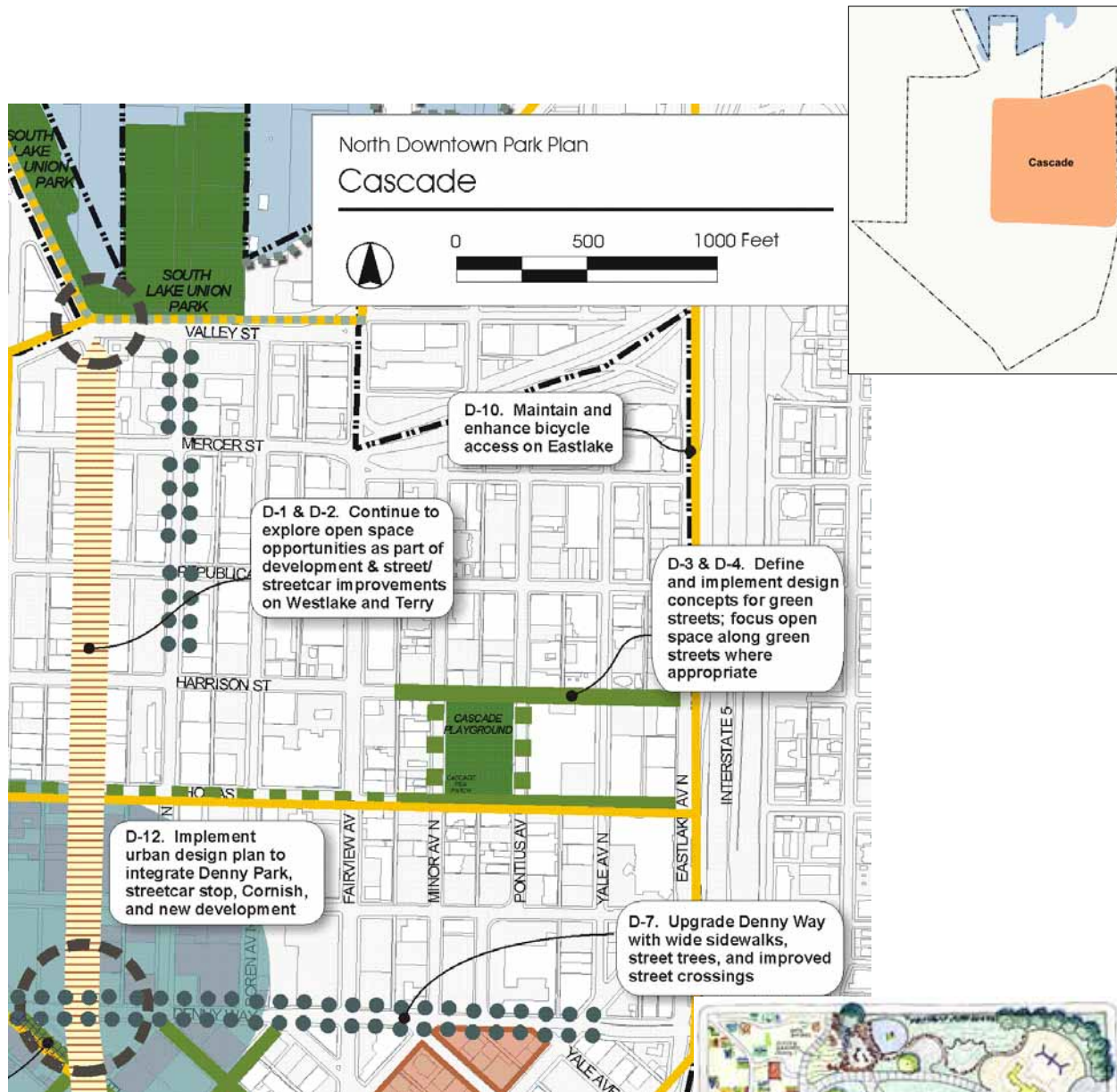


Figure 43. Key Acquisition and Development Strategies for Cascade.



Figure 44. Planned Improvements for Cascade Playground.

West South Lake Union

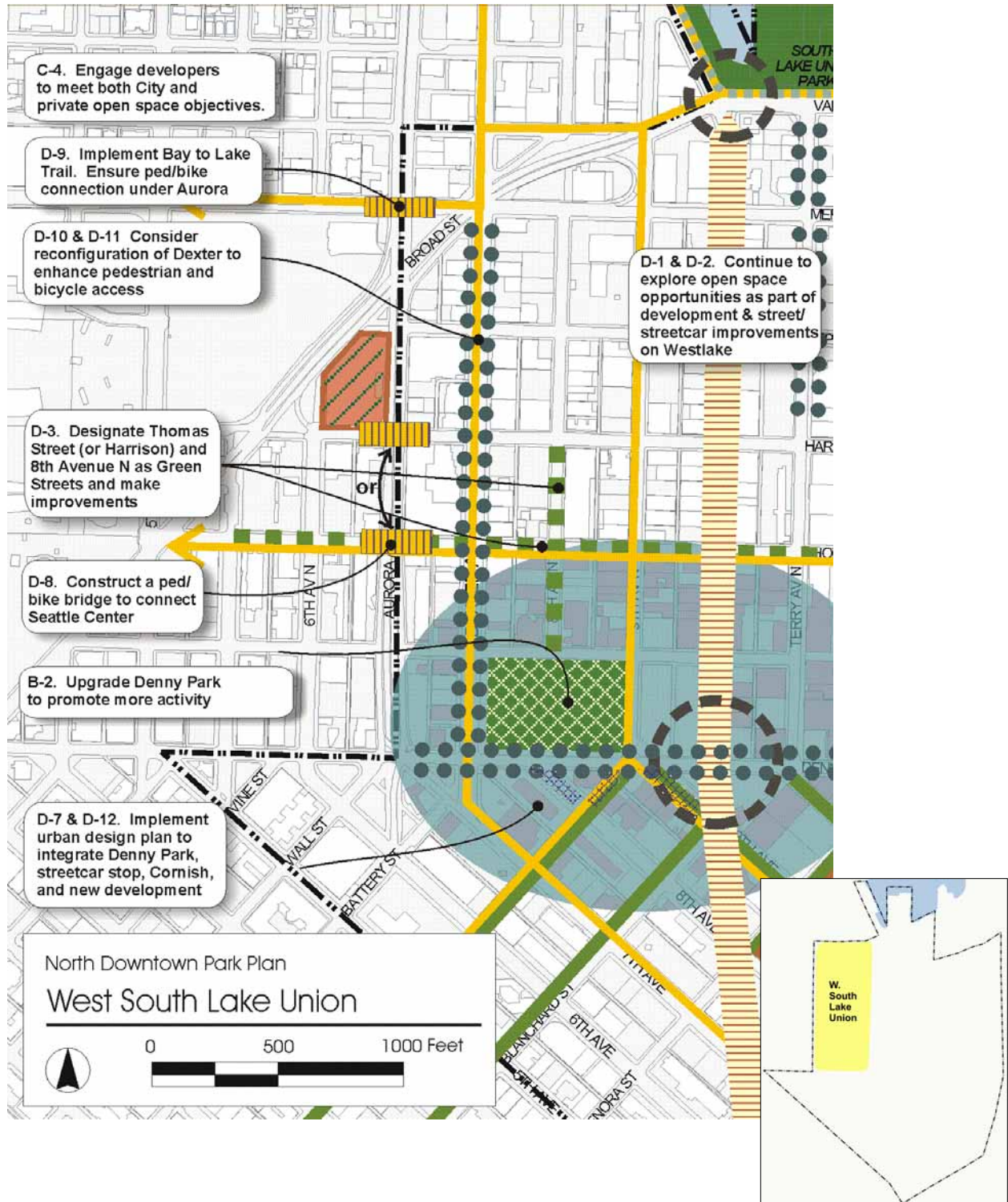


Figure 45. Key Acquisition and Development Strategies for West South Lake Union.